

A Tour of the U.S. Constitution

Amendments XX to XXVII

I. What is the major content of the 20th Amendment?

The **20th Amendment (enacted in 1933)** changed the date in which a presidential term would begin and end. The new date, under the 20th Amendment, was **January 20th**. A presidential term still remained 4 years in duration. The prior date that began and ended a presidential term was March 4th.

President Barack Obama's first term ran from January 20, 2009 to January 20, 2013. His second term began on January 20, 2013 and will end on January 20, 2017.

The **20th Amendment** also requires **Congress** to assemble at least once in every year, and the beginning of the meeting will be on **January 3rd**, unless a special law sets it at a different day.

There are four additional sections to the 20th Amendments, but you will not be accountable for those provisions.

2. What is the major content of the 21st Amendment?

The **21st Amendment** (enacted in **1933**) repealed the **18th Amendment**. Thus **Prohibition** was repealed.

The decision to legalize the making, transporting, and selling of alcoholic beverages thus became a state-by-state decision.

3. What is the major content of the 22nd Amendment?

The **22nd Amendment** (enacted in **1947**) requires that no person shall be elected President of the United States more than twice. It further requires that no person who has ascended to the presidency and served more than two years of that term, shall be elected president more than once.

For example, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama have all been elected President twice; therefore, none of these three men can be **ELECTED** as President ever again.

4. What is the major content of the 23rd Amendment?

The **23rd Amendment (enacted in 1961)** granted membership to the District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.) to the electoral college, thereby giving D.C. electoral votes in Presidential elections.

Currently, the District of Columbia has 3 electoral votes.

5. What is the major content of the 24th Amendment?

The **24th Amendment (enacted in 1964)** outlaws the use of **poll taxes or any other taxes** to deny or minimize the right of an individual to vote in a congressional or presidential election, including primaries.

6. What is the major content of the 25th Amendment?

The **25th Amendment (enacted in 1967)** deals with presidential succession.

Section 1 removes all doubt as to the role of the Vice President. Section 1 declares that upon the death or resignation of the President, the Vice President shall become the new President.

Section 2 requires that, when the Office of Vice President becomes vacant, the President shall nominate a Vice President, and that person shall become Vice President if both the House and Senate in Congress shall confirm the nominee with majority votes in both chambers.

Section 3 declares that, in the event that the President sends a written declaration (to the President *pro tempore* of the Senate and the Speaker of the House) of his incapacity to carry out his/her duties as President, then the Vice President shall be acting President until the President declares in writing that he/she can resume presidential duties.

Section 4 provides a complex process by which a President may be removed from office in the event of his/her incapacitation, but cannot or will not relinquish his/her presidential duties. You are not accountable for these details.

7. What is the major content of the 26th Amendment?

The **26th Amendment (enacted in 1971)** outlaws the denial or minimization of the right to vote to anyone 18 years or older on account of age.

The 26th Amendment gave 18 year olds the right to vote.

8. What is the major content of the 27th Amendment?

The **27th Amendment (enacted in 1992)** outlaws the alteration of Congressional pay (the salaries of U.S. Senators and Representatives) for that current congress.

Congress can, however, alter the pay of members of Congress who will serve in future congresses.